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Mr. Rhee's Call to Arms

New Republic

A Special Report on How to End Our National Economic Deficits

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T. R. B.

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Washington Wire

The slow, reluctant seepage of the facts of life into the GOP liberal groups which supported the Great Crusade of 1952 goes on. It is at once humorous and pathetic. Paul Hoffman's "Citizens for Eisenhower," for example, was such a group. It was to incorporate the idealistic liberals behind the Internationalist President. It would pointedly withhold support from Old Guard isolationists this fall. Recently its spokesmen circulated Washington news offices with the tip that Ike was holding back his endorsement in the Illinois Senatorial contest between liberal, internationalist Paul Douglas, the Democrat who is up for re-election, and Republican Joe Meek, paid professional lobbyist of the Illinois Federation of Retail Associations, who backs McCarthy, who backed the Bricker Amendment and who calls foreign aid the "give-away" program. Everything Ike stands for in foreign affairs Douglas supports; everything he stands for Meek, an isolationist of the Everett Dirksen school, opposes. And now, in a rather gooey exchange of felicitations, Ike has endorsed Meek. "May I say further," Ike writes playfully, "that I look forward with anticipation to greeting you on January 3 as the junior US Senator from Illinois." Well, maybe Ike won't have that pleasure. Maybe he will get a man who will support his foreign policy. As for "Citizens for Eisenhower" we rather think it ought to go spend a few weeks in silent meditation, and then probably disband.

Anyway you take him, Vermont Sen. Ralph Flanders is an oddity. He is a man of impeccable New England respectability like Leverett Saltonstall. Men like Saltonstall don't usually jump into lions' dens. Saltonstall doesn't. Flanders didn't leap in; he decided one morning it was time somebody did something about those lions and calmly stepped in. There is no reckless facet of his conservative Yankee personality that the Old Guard members of the Senate club can strike at. Dirksen roared out that *The Daily Worker* on such and such a day was supporting the Flanders motion, and the jammed evening audience loved it and simply guffawed. You could see the incongruity of the thing by glancing at the quiet, relaxed Flanders. He read the devastating indictment of McCarthy with his right hand in his pants pocket. Flanders' story is known: he had eight years of formal schooling, worked up as machinist to marry the boss' daughter, became honored, cultivated and wealthy. He has a lean triangular face, a little moustache and lower lip that looks as though it had a cotton wad behind it. There is a faint resemblance to Groucho Marx. As you look down at his thoroughly bald head, the one word that expresses his manner is unself-conscious.

McCarthy sits a long way from him. McCarthy cannot keep going without all the props. He conspicuously reads a newspaper while Flanders talks. He waves to his wife gleefully in the gallery. He sends up word to the press that a telephone tip has just come that somebody in the gallery threatens to shoot him (a provocative thought, but apparently baseless). Joe lives on histrionics while elderly Flanders is as placid as a rocking-chair grandmother. There is an odd, arid Yankee humor in Flanders that never ceases to astonish no matter how often repeated; everytime it is laid lightly across Joe's shoulders the skin comes off. Flanders and his Quixiotic motion of censure baffle and amaze Senators. Is the man crazy? He is the last one you would expect to start throwing furniture around . . . if you can call it that for a man who keeps one hand in his pocket and doesn't raise his voice. His spectacled eyes twinkle benevolence. The casuists, of course, promptly take over; they will do an expert suffocating job. What is the secret of Flanders? Well, if you ask us we would ascribe his peculiar behavior to some deep religious strain, or maybe to a warped patriotic illusion that Senate bullies should be curbed. You never can tell what a crackpot like that will do!

We must mention one curious journalistic quirk in last week's filibuster over the atomic energy give-away bill. This was the filibuster that newspapers never tried to explain. The *New York Times*, however, in what we assume was a laudable attempt at elucidation, published every day a box listing the catch-all bill's so-called "objectives." A more unfair result it would be hard to imagine. These "objectives" were all fine, handsome goals; you wondered more every day how any liberal could possibly oppose them. The answer was, of course, that there was little disagreement over objectives; the bitter battle was over methods to be followed.

The Republicans are the "tomorrow" party. Ike promises to lower world trade barriers but always in the bright tomorrow. In his campaign he promised trade-not-aid when elected—tomorrow. In his first year he created the Randall committee to study and report —tomorrow. On March 30, 1954, he told Congress, "If we fail in our trade policy we may fail in all." But he abandoned his program almost immediately; he said he would be content with a one-year interim program, and postpone tariff cuts—till tomorrow. Democrats fought to bring the President's original 3-year program to the Senate floor but Republicans unanimously opposed. And now Eisenhower, the great exponent of tariff cuts, has yielded to standard protection arguments in raising tariffs on Swiss watches. Don't you think for an instant he didn't favor freer world trade. But this must wait. Tomorrow.

Notes: Commerce Secretary Weeks' announcement that the Administration is giving a "nudge" to the lagging economy by speeding ship contracts shows the Administration is at least aware of the problem. . . . The idea that ex-Sen. Owen Brewster (R, Maine), who reportedly tapped Howard Hughes wires, and used the now indicted Henry ("Dutchman") Grunewald as 1950 payoff messenger boy, should be McCarthy's new Committee counsel is exquisitely appropriate; Joe and Owen—what a pair.

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Noteworthy This Week

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

The Flanders Symbol

WHEN the Majority leaders reluctantly agreed that Ralph Flanders of Vermont could bring his resolution of censure against Joe McCarthy to the floor of the Senate, they intended nothing more than a gesture. Flanders was to be given an hour to speak his piece and then pushed firmly aside with the excuse of the end-of-session rush.

Majority Leader William Knowland frankly stated that he would move to table Flanders' resolution without debate.

Until Alexander Smith (R, N. J.) feebly suggested the appointment of yet another committee to go into the anti-McCarthy charges, Knowland's plan had been to dispose of Flanders between 10 a.m. and noon. The surprising support the Flanders "symbol" received in early speeches by troubled Republicans like Prescott Bush (Conn.), Guy Cordon (Oreg.), and Sherman Cooper (Ky.), as well as Democrats, forced Knowland to change his mind.

There was no choice but to agree to full debate. When a succession of Senators granted the point that Flanders' simple resolution branding McCarthy's conduct "unbecoming" did not, in fact, comply with parliamentary principle, Knowland was maneuvered farther back. He admitted the propriety of establishing a new committee to consider specific bills of particulars as offered by Senators Fulbright (D, Ark.) and Morse, and in so doing, left himself open to the next move by Irving Ives (R, N. Y.), that the new committee be required to report back "by August 10 or before adjournment." It opened Knowland also to Sen. Henry Jackson's (D, Wash.) proposal — the same demand Sen. Stuart Symington had made repeatedly during the Army-McCarthy investigation—that the committee be authorized to hold hearings and issue subpoenas. (The effect of the latter will ultimately be to compel the calling of McCarthy to testify under oath.) The containing of Senator McCarthy has progressed as a result of Flanders' stubborn demand for a showdown. Those private citizens, like Paul Hoffman, who, safely outside the arena, did what they could to make the issue clear, share in Senator Flanders' glory.

The great failure, again, was in the White House. In the heat of the debate, Presidential representatives kept the pressure on Senator Flanders to drop the fight. Didn't he realize that by persisting in forcing a vote he was defeating Republicans like Saltonstall, who dared not take sides?

Or Best Off?

GENERAL MOTORS financial statement for the first six months of 1954 shows that sales fell 8 percent below last year's level but profits in that period rose 36 percent. Prices were held steady.

The E. I. Dupont Co., largest maker of chemicals, reports "record earnings," for Jan. 1- June 30. Net income was up 1/3; Dupont sales too were down 8 percent. Prices had not been cut.

The number of full-time and part-time unemployed during those six months rose by millions.

Business Week (July 31, 1954) discloses the result of a private survey made during June and July to find out the "mood" of consumers under the circumstances. "People feel well-off financially," *Business Week* says in summarizing the findings. "However, it is important to note that this improvement is confined to the group with higher incomes. . . ."

"Consumers feel faith in the future," *Business Week's* report concludes. But "Once again," it sadly adds, "the upper-income group is the more optimistic. It is also . . . the best-informed segment of the population."

Eisenhower Cornerstone

WITH ONE exception—the new formula for depreciation allowances — Senate amendments to the Administration's omnibus tax bill improved it. Even the compromise version reported by the House-Senate Conference was better than that originally passed by the House (*NR*, March 29). But as a forthcoming *NR* feature article will demonstrate in detail, the bill still cannot in any way be made to fit President Eisenhower's description: "a tax plan fair to all."

Defeated in their effort to raise personal exemptions—favoring the small taxpayer—Senate Democrats did succeed in throwing out the section allowing stockholders a preferential 10-percent tax reduction. That provision now has been restored at the compromise level of 4 percent. A stockholder now is allowed to subtract 4 percent of his total stock-income *not from the taxable income itself, but from his tax payment.*

The 875-page bill — about which members of the House Ways and Means Committee frankly admitted "we do not fully understand"—contains many such sections, as well as others which are pure doubletalk: the American Bar Association, for example, urged that the section on taxation of partnerships be scrapped because no one understood it, and it would take the courts years to straighten it out. And some of the provisions knocked out by the Senate probably will be sneaked into an as yet un-named, un-numbered "supplementary" bill being prepared in the House for quick passage in the closing days of the session.

But of all the sections in the bill, the one on depreciation allowances will be the most costly. As originally passed by the House, this provision would have reduced Treasury revenue by $19 billion during the next 18 years (House Ways and Means Committee Minority Report). The Senate "improved" it so that now during the next 20 years Treasury income will be reduced by $43 billion.

At present, in computing taxes, the value of plant and equipment is reduced by 5 percent each year for 20 years. The new law concentrates depreciation allowance (beginning with a 10-percent write-off the first year) into the early years. In the 20th, deductions allowed

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under both systems become equal. But since the amount of deduction allowed under the new plan never is less than the present rate, taxes not collected during the first 19 years will never be recovered. The Treasury in effect has been deprived of $43 billion in revenue by a "balance-the-budget" Administration. And every suceeding Administration for 20 years will be affected. Which adds weight to Treasury Secretary Humphrey's assertion that "this is a businessman's Administration."

Of course, one of the surest ways to guarantee eventual public acceptance of a Federal Sales Tax is so to arrange matters that revenue falls even though income-tax rates remain constant. It then becomes possible to tell people that the continuing deficit requires either higher rates or a sales tax, knowing that an increase in income tax is the last thing most people want.

McKay's Fire Sale

THAT "Buy Out The Government" campaign (*NR*, June 21) is chalking up bigger and bigger successes with the help of an Administration eager to sell. The government's synthetic rubber plants are on the block, along with a synthetic liquid fuel plant and a number of less noticeable items. And Interior Secretary Douglas McKay has announced —just as Congress is due to pack up and leave—a real fire-sale. "Everything Must Go!"

Helium has been produced by the government since 1925 at four plants worth $15 million. All four will be sold. The biggest consumer of helium is the government; its needs have increased to the point where President Eisenhower requested $6 million to build additional capacity this year. From now on the government will buy the gas from private industry at a higher price and with no control over the supply.

Oil shale, as a source of low-cost fuel, has become increasingly important as our fuel consumption continues to expand—we import one million barrels of petroleum a day. The government plant at the Rifle, Colorado, Naval Reserve has, through long and expensive research, nearly perfected a process of extracting oil from shale at a competitive cost. The plant will be sold. Oil companies have shown no interest in continuing the research to perfect the synthetic low-cost substitute.

Titanium and *Zirconium* are both rare, expensive metals of crucial importance to our defense effort. The first is used extensively in jet engines, the second in shields for atomic reactors. The government manufactures titanium at Boulder City, Nevada, and zirconium at Albany, Oregon—both plants will be sold.

The basic process for extracting and producing these two metals was worked out by the US Bureau of Mines. Only extreme pressure by the Department of Defense brought private industry, beginning in 1948, into titanium production. Dupont, Remington and National Lead now make some of this metal. Zirconium is still produced only by the government; a Carborundum Metals Co., plant will soon open at Niagara Falls. Neither metal will find extensive civilian use until much more efficient processes bring production costs down to a competitive level. But private concerns now producing titanium—the same will hold for zirconium—receive a subsidy in the form of guaranteed profits. Why should they undertake the necessary extended and expensive research which would not begin to pay off for many years? By pulling out now, the government is tempting the four giant firms already in the field to push research just far enough to be permitted patents. Through such patents, these firms can prevent competition and end up controlling a new industry—knowing that they can sell whatever quantity they wish to produce at whatever price they care to ask.

There is no formula for determining when the government has brought research on a new product to the point where it can safely turn the whole thing over to private enterprise. But it is reasonable to say that the transfer should be made only when processes have been developed to a point permitting competition. Government research is not private research. When a corporation invests in research, it rightly expects to reap the biggest benefit. When the government invests the taxpayers' money in research because corporations won't take the risk, the public has a right to be considered.

McKay also has ordered that the Bureau of Mines close down its large ore-pressing plants at Salt Lake City, Utah, and Tuscaloosa, Alabama. And he has ordered synthetic gaseous and liquid fuel research at Morgantown and Bruceton, Pennsylvania, cut to a "small scale activity."

Glen Rides Again

THE PRESENCE of former Sen. Glen Taylor (Henry Wallace's running-mate in 1948) in Idaho's Democratic Senate primary has not brought out the expected fireworks. None of the three candidates to oppose Republican Sen. Henry C. Dworshak has hurled anathemas at the others. Taylor, Claude Burtenshaw, a professor at Ricks College,

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and Alvin McCormick, Lewiston wheat rancher and former official of the Production and Marketing Administration in the last Administration, have all directed their fire at the Eisenhower Administration with particular emphasis on the farm issue, unemployment, which is high in Idaho, and the tax policies of the GOP. Both McCormick and Burtenshaw have endorsed federal development of the Hell's Canyon stretch of the Snake River, and while Taylor is attempting to run as quietly as possible, his past record as an advocate of this project and river basin development in general is regarded as sufficient evidence of his stand on this issue.

In addition to the lack of a Donnybrook between the three contenders, there have been no big-time displays of advertising, heavy use of radio or TV. Since none is well-financed, all have turned to personal contacts, small group meetings and precinct work. Taylor, especially, has been traveling throughout the state, and into nearly every area, where he spends whole days going from door to door.

The absence of the "dead cats" showered on Taylor in the 1950 Senate race is also notable. The explanation: Republicans who financed those attacks are counting on Taylor's nomination dividing the Democratic Party to such an extent that not only Dworshak but the entire GOP slate will slide safely home. Look for the big broadsides to thunder if and when Taylor is successful in the primary.

Battleground

ALL OTHER issues aside, continued high unemployment alone could end Republican control of the House this year. The Democrats need only 4 seats. Ninety-five Congressional districts now contain "labor surplus" areas—where more than 6 percent of the industrial workers are without jobs. Thirty-five of these districts elected Representatives in 1952 by a margin of 7 percent or less of the votes cast: 19 Republicans, 15 Democrats, 1 Independent. Since people tend to blame the party in power for such troubles as unemployment, and as 7 of the 19 Republican seats were held by Democrats before the Eisenhower sweep, Republicans are worried.

Dispatch from London

Relief rather than enthusiasm is Britain's predominant emotion after the Geneva Conference. No one denies that the cease-fire brings a definitive strengthening of the Communist position in Asia, which Burma and Malaya may be among the first to feel. But most Englishmen have long seen the French position in Indo-China as both politically embarrassing and militarily untenable. So there is relief that the Geneva Conference has at last cut Western losses in the Far East—on terms a good deal better than once was feared.

Much credit is given to Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden's persistence, but it is recognized that both America's threatening stance and India's pressure for an end to the fighting helped to persuade the Communists that a political agreement held fewer risks than continuing the war. For Britain, perhaps the greatest gain of the conference is that the Colombo powers are at last committed to a positive interest in preserving the new status quo. This is the first great stride toward providing some form of collective security against Communist aggression in the Far East. And Britain seems to feel that the consolidation of this political gain is more urgent than any attempt to jerry-build a military pact which cannot at present be backed by troops.

For the Communists, the great gain of Geneva is the encouragement given to those in Europe and Asia who believe that peaceful co-existence can be achieved without strength and unity among the non-Communist powers. Some such initiative as the Soviet note requesting new talks on European security was thus inevitable, if only to forestall a French decision on EDC. And though the type of European system proposed by Russia is quite unacceptable to all the Western allies, the proposal will need careful handling if it is not to create new divisions in the West.

The Communists argue, of course, that if agreement could be reached on Asia it can be reached on Europe, too. It must be pointed out that agreement was reached on Indo-China because the local weakness of the West left no alternative but surrender to the Communists. In Europe fortunately the West is under no compulsion to surrender, nor is its case clouded by the moral ambiguities which sapped morale on Indo-China. Nevertheless, a blunt refusal to discuss Germany again might wreck the chances of EDC in Paris, where for the first time in years there is a real chance of a decision very soon.

An interesting feature of the new Soviet strategy is the attention paid to the Socialist opposition in England and Germany. The Berlin Conference of the SPD was a remarkably successful holding operation by what Russia now calls the "American" wing of the party. Ollenhauer managed to defeat every unequivocal resolution against German rearmament in favor of his own resolution which leaves him free to discuss the form of a German defense contribution if this becomes "inevitable." But the Communists continue to woo the rank and file of the SPD with the old tactic of the United Front from below.

In Britain the Labour Party is no less assiduously courted by world Communism. Following the acceptance of an invitation to visit Communist China, the National Executive has now been invited to send a delegation to the Soviet Zone of Germany. More interesting still, the fellow-traveling Italian Socialist, Pietro Nenni, has just visited London in the hope of renewing official contact with the Labour Party. He made a poor impression, and went home empty handed. However, in their new pamphlet, the Bevanite members of the National Executive have produced a number of arguments against German rearmament which coincide so nearly with current Cominform propaganda that the approaching struggle at the Party Conference is bound to arouse more interest than ever in Moscow.

London DENIS HEALEY, M.P.

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Everybody's Friend —Nobody's Leader

by Frank Tollman

TWO YOUNG Texas politicians passed each other last week. One, Gov. Allan Shivers, was on his way down from the national picture. The other, Sen. Lyndon Johnson, was intently on his way up.

When, in 1952, a boomlet was started by a magazine article for Johnson to become the Democratic nominee for Vice President, he was furious. There were many reasons why he didn't want to be considered in 1952, including the fact that he had won his Democratic primary nomination in 1948 over former Gov. Coke Stevenson by only 87 votes out of nearly a million cast. He had won it over the formal opposition of organized labor, and had won it after a bitter court and newspaper battle in which he was accused of having had some friends swipe the 87 votes, and a few more besides.

THE '54 CAMPAIGN

On the other hand, Governor Shivers won a second-term in 1952 without much of a campaign over Judge Ralph Yarborough of Austin, and then went on to endorse Ike and lead Texas into the GOP camp in 1952 by more than 100,000 votes. From 1952 to July 24, 1954, Shivers was looked on to deliver the Texas Democratic Party for the conservatives in 1956.

But the Democratic primary on July 24 changed both pictures. Shivers, faced with a hard race for the first time in his life, barely led Judge Yarborough, 666,000 to 632,000, and was forced into a run-off election August 28 which is likely to be as close, if not closer. To get into the run-off, Shivers had to reverse his earlier (and personal) stand on non-segregation, and denounce the US Supreme Court up and down East Texas, while his eldest son attends an unsegregated Catholic junior high school. He had to dig deep and spend well over $100,000 of officially reported money, and it wasn't until the votes from the Border Bosses of South Texas came in that Shivers was even in the lead. He carried the major cities of Dallas, Houston, Fort Worth and San Antonio only by skimpy margins, and lost more counties than he carried.

In other words, Shivers turned out to be lucky to get in a run-off, with droughty Texas unhappy with the GOP Administration and wanting someone to blame it on, and with farmers and labor voting solidly together for the first time in Texas history.

Johnson has spent his first term in the Senate busily mending fences, and even his worst enemies had about given up hope of beating him this time until State Rep. Dudley Dougherty, a millionaire rancher whose ranch is studded with oil wells, surprised everyone by announcing for the Senate against Johnson.

Dougherty wasn't a heavyweight candidate. He had turned in a liberal voting record, if erratic on labor issues, in the 1953 Legislature, and had been the largest single contributor to Adlai Stevenson's campaign fund in Texas in 1952. But Dougherty quickly decided that if he was to beat Johnson, he had to appear more conservative. So he came out for resignation of the United States from the United Nations, became the most isolationist candidate internationalist Texas ever heard, and started jumping on Johnson for a long-ago vote to abolish the Dies Committee.

Former Governor Coke Stevenson came out of retirement to head Dougherty's campaign against Johnson, and former Governor Dan Moody came out strongly for Dougherty. Dougherty started his campaign with a 24-hour TV and radio talkathon from Houston, in which he succeeded in alienating all sorts of voters. His advisers kept him away from the ad libbing after that,

Shivers

Yarborough

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but despite heavy spending, Dougherty never did get up enough steam to worry Johnson.

As Senate Minority Leader Johnson had a good excuse to stay in Washington, and he did. Midway in Dougherty's campaign—Johnson never made one—the Senate Labor Committee reported out a version of the Taft-Hartley Act which organized labor found even more objectionable than the law itself. This allowed Johnson to do what few politicians ever can—change sides while standing still. In 1948, he had loudly defended his vote for the original Taft-Hartley bill. In 1952, he defended the Taft-Hartley status quo, rounded up a solid block consisting of every Democrat in the Senate to vote to send the proposed Eisenhower revisions back to committee, and thus won labor's support. Labor contributed substantially to the 875,000 to 350,000 lead Johnson had over Dougherty when the unofficial tabulation in this race was abandoned.

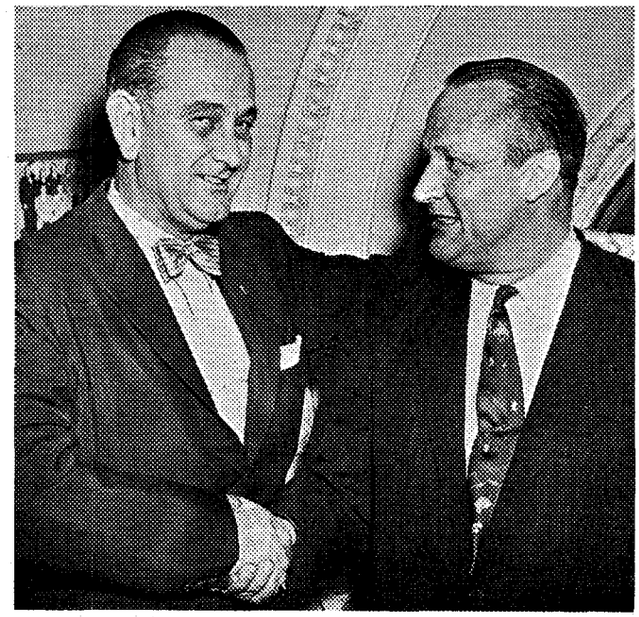
With the ignominy of the 87-vote win of 1948 erased, and given the added facts that no major candidate could be persuaded to run against him and that he made no campaign at all, Johnson is in a much sounder position than when he first went to the Senate in 1949.

(Texas gave Sam Rayburn some new Democratic votes in the House of Representatives, too. In the Fort Worth district, Rep. Wingate Lucas was eliminated by Mayor Jim Wright of Weatherford, a "loyal" Democrat who campaigned for Stevenson in '52. Wright bowled over the Amon Carter machine and rubbed it in —winning by a 14,000-vote margin. In the El Paso district, State Sen. J. T. Rutherford, who also supported Adlai in 1952, had a harder time eliminating Rep. Ken Regan, who usually votes GOP. Oddly enough, all five of the Texas Congressmen who will be replaced, either by choice or otherwise, were all those who either came out for Ike in 1952, or who said they wouldn't vote for Adlai.)

IF GOVERNOR Shivers should be defeated in the August run-off, it will be taken as evidence that there is not much future for "me-too" Democrats even in Texas. Those who understand the Johnson system for political success think that might bring a change in the tactics of the Minority Leader if he does cherish the national ambitions ascribed to him.

Americans who can't figure out the Democratic leader of the Senate, especially when he joins Senate Republican Leader William Knowland in a statement on China policy, or when he sits on his hands on the atomic power bill, should study the Johnson formula.

In Texas Johnson constantly keeps his finger in the wind. His leadership in the state has consisted of anticipating the thinking of the major groups of voters and following what he believes to be public opinion instead of trying to mold it. The Johnson system is to avoid rows and antagonize as few people as possible. That approach carried over into the Senate has meant



Majority Leader William Knowland, right, congratulates Democratic Leader Lyndon Johnson for the lead the Texan is holding in his race for renomination.

that Lyndon Johnson doesn't get into a fight for a fight's sake. He has picked his battles with the GOP on issues like Taft-Hartley, which he thought he could win.

But Johnson is like a fire chief who doesn't turn on the siren unless he can save the house. When he thinks he can't win, he sits on the side, looking for another weak spot where a successful attack might be launched. This naturally gets him in dutch with many Democrats, who think there are fights which should be made even if a loss is certain.

Once he decides to fight Senator Johnson is a tireless organizer. When he set out to get all the Democrats voting together against changes in Taft-Hartley, he went to the length of asking Governor Herman Talmadge of Georgia to send out highway patrolmen to catch Sen. John Sparkman, who was en route to Florida for a rest after his hot primary victory. He maintains several research staffs in his various capacities as Democratic leader, chairman of the Democratic Policy Committee, and Senator from Texas so that when he goes into a fight, he's well armed, with facts, not only on the issue, but especially on the record of the Democratic Senators whose votes he must wheedle into line at the right time.

But technique not principle is the Minority Leader's forte. Long a strong internationalist and interventionist, Johnson distressed some by his recent coolness to foreign aid programs. When he joined Knowland in a demand that China not be considered for UN membership, he was voicing a popular Texas attitude, and he was also taking away some of the isolationist thunder his opponent back home was firing. The charge that Shivers is a "me-too" man for Eisenhower hurt in the Texas primary. Johnson's problem is how to avoid fights in the Senate without gaining the same reputation.

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EDITORIAL

Mr. Rhee's Call to Arms

SUPPOSE that a war fought on our soil left the United States in ruins—our roads wrecked, our homes burned, our fields eroded. Suppose that 10 million of our soldiers had been killed in that war, and another 8 million civilians. Suppose further that 15 million Americans were homeless, that 40 million could not support themselves, that 8 million had tuberculosis and that only a fraction of these were hospitalized. What, then, would we think of a President who demanded that we launch a new world war?

There are two million homeless in South Korea, five million who are not self-supporting, a million who suffer unaided from tuberculosis. Ninety-five percent of the people of Korea are weakened by internal parasites, according to the World Health Organization Health Planning Mission in Korea, and countless thousands suffer further without treatment or hospitalization from leprosy and venereal disease.

Under these circumstances, Korea's crying need is reconstruction. And the reconstruction of Korea is the acknowledged commitment of the United Nations. But, blind to this source of hope, President Rhee has come to Washington to cut the United Nations out of Korea, and to concentrate on increased military aid for his armies on the promise that these armies will be used as mercenaries in an aggressive world war.

The true setting for Rhee's summons to a new war was provided by the United Nations. One week before he arrived it released its *Economic Programme for Korean Reconstruction,* prepared by Robert R. Nathan Associates for the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency. This 500-page report sets forth in the perspective Rhee will not face the nation's desperate need for years of peace.

The report notes that even during the Japanese occupation "basic resources were depleted in Korea. . . ." While farm production in the South was saved from the worst ravages of the Korean War, livestock was decimated, irrigation systems were damaged, close to 50 percent of factories, power stations and mines were damaged, and railroads, roads and coastal shipping were badly hurt. Prices rose 20 times from June, 1950, to June, 1953, creating a new class of wealthy speculators and black marketeers while it impoverished the majority of the people. And today, a new inflation is in prospect thanks to Rhee's budget in which revenues amount to no more than 55 percent of expenditures.

The UN report holds that an ambitious five-year program of reconstruction is demanded to provide minimum living standards and an economic basis for independence for Korea. It calls for a 50-percent rise in national income by 1959 to attain living standards that are barely above prewar levels, and for an eight-fold increase in exports to establish a balance in foreign trade. To achieve these goals the free nations will have to provide an estimated $1.24 billion in aid.

This program, the UN report holds, is vital for the Korean people. It adds that government policies have been misdirected in the past in stimulating inflation, in tolerating waste and corruption, and in ignoring basic economic needs. In the strongest indictment of Rhee's police state that the UN can properly make, the report states:

> The recent past and present operation of the Korean economy falls short by a wide margin of achieving the degree of efficiency needed for the reconstruction program. . . . The bald fact is that sweeping changes and improvements are vitally needed. Unless Korea is transformed into an efficient economic concern by appropriate policy and institutional changes the fundamental purpose of Korean reconstruction will not have been accomplished.

These are the true tasks of government in Korea. Instead Rhee, after receiving the hospitality of the White House and Congress, used the occasion of his visit to demand that this country lead the world into atomic war in order that he may preside over the ruins of North Korea. He promises us 40 divisions of mercenaries, and half million men from Formosa (what more in the way of anti-American propaganda could Moscow and Peking hope for!). All that we need to provide is bombers and atomic bombs to devastate the Chinese mainland which then is to welcome back Chiang Kai-shek. Certainly the Russians will join in the war. "But that would be excellent," Rhee declares, "since it would justify the destruction of the Soviet centers of production by the American Air Force."

RHEE is free at any time to start this war. But the United States is no longer hog-tied to Rhee as we were throughout the Korean conflict. Our allies most certainly are not going to provide funds for the build-up of a police state bent on launching a world war. Nor can the United States maintain its alliance both with the peaceful nations of Europe and with this wild man bent on war. Given Rhee's stand the President, if he is mindful of the danger, has no choice but to hold up all military aid pending hard and fast assurances against its use for aggressive military moves by the Fanatic of Seoul.

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A REPORT BY THE CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC PROGRESS

Toward Full Employment and Full Production

THIS ARTICLE and a second which will follow next week presents in abbreviated form the first in a series of important studies by a new non-profit, non-political group, the Conference on Economic Progress. The staff work is directed by Leon H. Keyserling, chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers under Harry S. Truman. Those in whose names this first Conference study is issued include Morris Llewellyn Cooke, consulting engineer and first chief of the Rural Electrification Administration, William H. Davis, attorney and former Director of the Office of Economic Stabilization, Richard H. Frost, executive vice president of the National Pneumatic Company, A. J. Hayes, President, International Association of Machinists, Murray D. Lincoln, president National Farmers Union, Walter Reuther, president CIO, M. W. Thatcher, president National Federation of Grain Co-ops.

WE NOW know two things that the skeptics doubted: first, that we can have full prosperity with peace; and second, that our productive power has now reached the point where, even at current or somewhat increased levels of defense outlays, we must raise still higher our standard of living to keep up with the abundance that pours from our factories and our farms.

After all, what is the core lesson of the substantial economic recession which started in mid-1953? It is just this: until we learn to enlarge consumption enough to match our onrushing productive power, this very productive power—which could be an unmixed blessing—remains a chronic menace to our well-being even when defense outlays are high.

To prevent this menace from accumulating long-run strength as our technology and productivity rise faster and faster, we should face up to it now. Although there have been signs of "leveling off" toward the middle of 1954, the outlook is uncertain and a return to full employment and full production is not yet at hand. The pause in the downward spiral permits us to act in time; it does not justify complacency.

We do not need, to spur us on, the somber warnings that a deep depression lies somewhat ahead. That may be unlikely, for many safeguards have been built into the economic structure. But we must set our sights above the mere avoidance of ultimate calamity. There is no need for millions of American families to undergo the hardships and anxieties of substantial recessions. The rise in full-time and part-time unemployment since the middle of last year has been the equivalent of more than 3 million full-time jobs. Our total output of goods and services is now running at an annual rate about $27 billion below the full employment and full production level. If we restore a full economy by early next year and maintain it until the end of 1960, our aggregate enjoyment of goods and services over this whole period can be at least $200 billion higher than if we should experience some "mild" recessions—even without a real depression. We cannot afford such losses, at a time when some people say we cannot "afford" adequate defense or enough schools.

There is also a more vital affirmative task. Especially in view of the international situation, mere resort to defensive measures is not worthy of the American spirit. We need not only a more effective anti-recession program, but also a positive pro-prosperity program, a program that will enable us to meet whatever international costs and whatever domestic responsibilities may confront us. If we enlarge our total output by about 4.2 percent a year, which is the minimum alternative to

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rising unemployment, we can achieve a $500 billion American economy by the end of 1960. And if we seek not merely to prevent unemployment but also to do our very best on all fronts, if we release fully and without fear the energies of our productive system, we could probably advance at about the same rate during the next few years as we did between 1950 and 1953, and thus come close to a $600 billion economy by the end of 1960.

This presents a continuous task for all thoughtful citizens. A review of all our experience makes it clear that government cannot do the whole job; and, under our traditions, we would not want government to do the whole job even if it could. Responsible free enterprise and responsible free government are both essential.

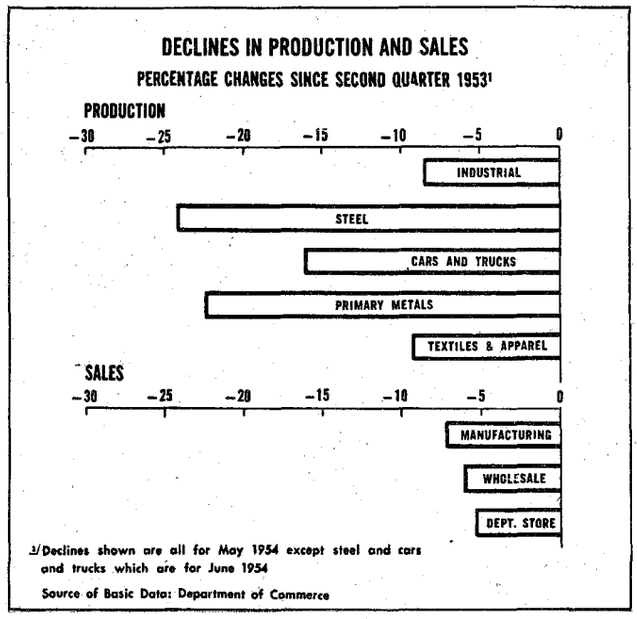
Only by maintaining a full economy can we protect the American system from economic misfortunes which tend to produce excessive control from the top.

Danger Signals in 1954

While our total national product declined only 4.1 percent from the peak second quarter of 1953 to the second quarter of 1954, the reverses in important sectors of the economy have been far greater. The most recent figures indicate that, since the second quarter of last year, there has been a fall of about 8 percent in industrial production, about 24 percent in steel production, about 13 percent in car and truck production, about 10 percent in the production of textiles and apparel, and about 7 percent in total manufacturing sales.

These declines have hit millions of families; they have injured or destroyed many businesses; and they have caused anxiety throughout the nation. They are warning signals to all, because larger contractions in vital parts of the economy reveal general weaknesses which can spread to the whole structure if not remedied in time.

But the difficulties which now confront us cannot be measured solely by the declines from the levels of a year ago. Due to new science and better tools, output per man hour increases every year. The number of people able and willing to work also grows every year.



Counting both our increasing productivity and our growing labor force, it appears that maintenance of full employment and full production from the first quarter of last year to the first quarter of this year would have required an actual annual growth in output of at least 4.2 percent. This would have lifted our annual rate of output from $363.9 billion to about $379 billion. In contrast, the actual annual rate in the first quarter of this year was only $357.8 billion, which was more than $21 billion, or 5.6 percent, below the needed level.

This checks well with the rise in unemployment. Unemployment at 5.6 percent of the full employment level (62-63 million jobs) would be about 3½ million unemployed. Add to this figure about 1½ million, which may be close to the irreducible minimum of "frictional" unemployment in a free and flexible peacetime economy, and the total comes to about 5 million unemployed. This was about the actual level of true unemployment toward the end of the first quarter of this year, counting not only full-time unemployment as reported by the Census Bureau but also temporary unemployment and the forced reductions in the work week. In the second quarter, allowing for seasonal factors, the true level of unemployment seems to have been essentially the same.

UTILIZING this method, we can grasp the full significance of the difficulties confronting us when the actual growth of our economy does not keep up with our growing productive power, by looking a bit ahead. By the first quarter of next year, if the level of economic activity were to remain the same as in the first quarter of this year, instead of keeping up with the growth in productivity and in the labor force, the true level of unemployment could be well in excess of 7 million. This might be reduced to reported full-time unemployment of about 5½-6 million by temporary unemployment, part-time employment, and further discouragement of prospective entries into the labor force. And if the level of economic activity early next year were only 5 percent lower than early this year, this could mean a true unemployment figure in excess of 10 million, which might be reduced to about 8½-9 million reported full-time unemployment by various practices for sharing unemployment. These are not forecasts of what is going to happen; they show what we can and must avoid.

We have just noted that our national economic deficit was running at an annual rate of more than $21 billion in the first quarter of this year. Utilizing the same method of projection, our national economic deficit in the second quarter of this year, allowing for growth required to keep up with an advancing technology and labor force, is at an annual rate of about $27 billion.

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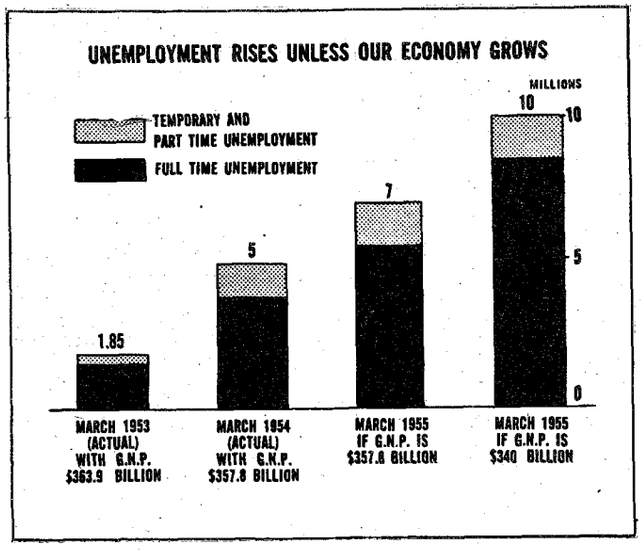
This is enough wealth and productive power to replace almost 3 million slum dwellings with decent housing, and more than enough to cover the cost of the intercontinental defense installations which many experts say we imperatively need but which some people say we cannot "afford." If economic activity merely holds close



to the first or second quarter 1954 levels instead of moving substantially upward, the national economic deficit by the first quarter of next year could rise to an annual rate of $37 billion. And with a decline of about 5 percent in economic activity, the national economic deficit of $55 billion by the first quarter of next year would be about the total current annual cost of all federal expenditures for goods and services including national defense.

In the second quarter of 1954 as a whole, employment was considerably higher and reported full-time unemployment slightly lower than in the first quarter. But this reflected less than normal seasonal improvement. In June, the increase in employment was less than the seasonal trend in recent years, and the less than seasonal increase in unemployment resulted from a far less than seasonal growth in the civilian labor force. Counting temporary and part-time unemployment, it appears that the true level of unemployment, which was in the neighborhood of 5 million in March, was not much different in the second quarter, allowing for seasonal factors.

The gross national product for the second quarter of the year, according to preliminary government estimates, was $356 billion. This was slightly lower than in the first quarter, and about $27 billion below the $383 billion figure that would have represented full employment and full production in the second quarter (based upon the 4.2 percent minimum needed annual rate of growth).

These inconclusive trends in the second quarter of 1954 must be combined with the fact that federal outlays are scheduled to decline further; that business investment in plant and equipment for the balance of this year is estimated below last year; and that there has been no significant upward surge in consumer spending. This explains why a majority of the most responsible analysts in the government and elsewhere forecast no more for the next few months than that the "leveling off" will become more pronounced, or that there will be a slight upward tilt of economic activity.

But it is clear that only a rapid and substantial upturn can prevent an early resumption of the rise in unemployment, as our productivity and labor force grow. In fact, despite the "leveling off" now in process, the level of total output, consumption and employment were further below the full economy level in the second quarter of this year than in the first quarter—since we cannot stay healthy by standing still. As pointed out earlier, our national economic deficit has risen from about $21 billion in the first quarter of this year to about $27 billion in the second quarter, and would rise to about $37 billion if the "leveling off" continues into early 1955.

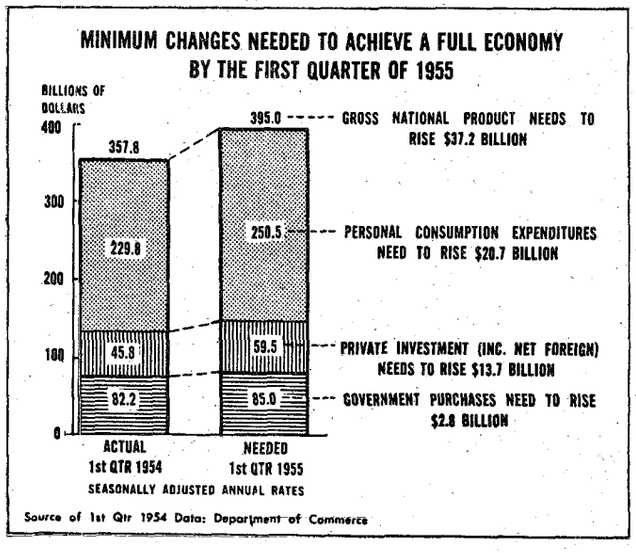
Under these circumstances, it is at best an unnecessary risk and at worst a dangerous gamble to delay adoption of an adequate full employment and full production program.

Needed Immediate Program

To restore full employment and full production, the minimum needed economic changes are indicated by the following chart. Due to the conservative growth rate used, the projection of needed levels from first quarter rather than from the peak second quarter 1953, and the further decline in total product in second quarter 1954, even larger changes may well be needed.

It is highly desirable that the government promptly initiate these restorative steps:

1. As indicated by the chart below, the annual rate



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of federal outlays should be increased by about $3 billion above the rate in the first quarter of this year. This would still be about $2.5 billion below the rate in the middle of 1953. If increases of this size in national security outlays are not needed (though they may well be), there are enormous backlogs of needs at home—for roads, schools, hospitals, and many other public works.

2. If the increase in the annual rate of federal outlays is kept within the general magnitude set forth above, the federal government should also reduce personal income taxes by about $4.5 billion, with as much of the reduction as feasible as far down in the income structure as feasible to promote current spending.

3. Assurances should be given that the present liberal credit and monetary policy will be continued. The money supply and liquid asset holdings are closely related to the public debt, and the holdings of this debt by financial institutions and directly by the people are important elements of our economic strength and stability. Proposals by the Executive Branch to authorize the enlargement of the national debt are highly desirable.

4. Measures to stabilize and in the long run to enlarge farm income while absorbing surpluses should be undertaken.

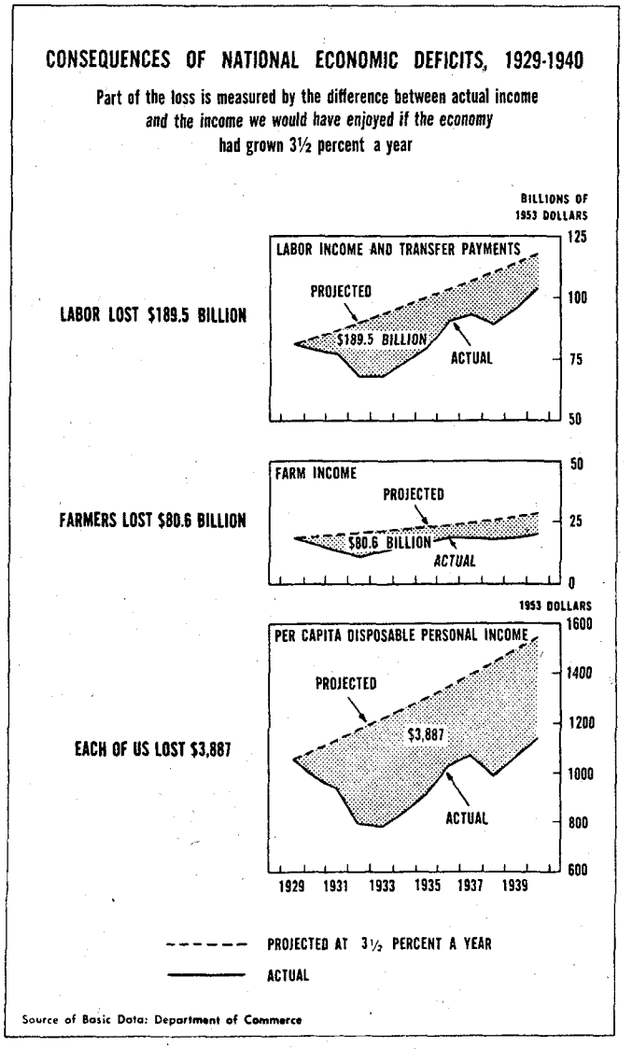
5. Unemployment compensation should be expanded to augment the buying power of those temporarily unemployed.

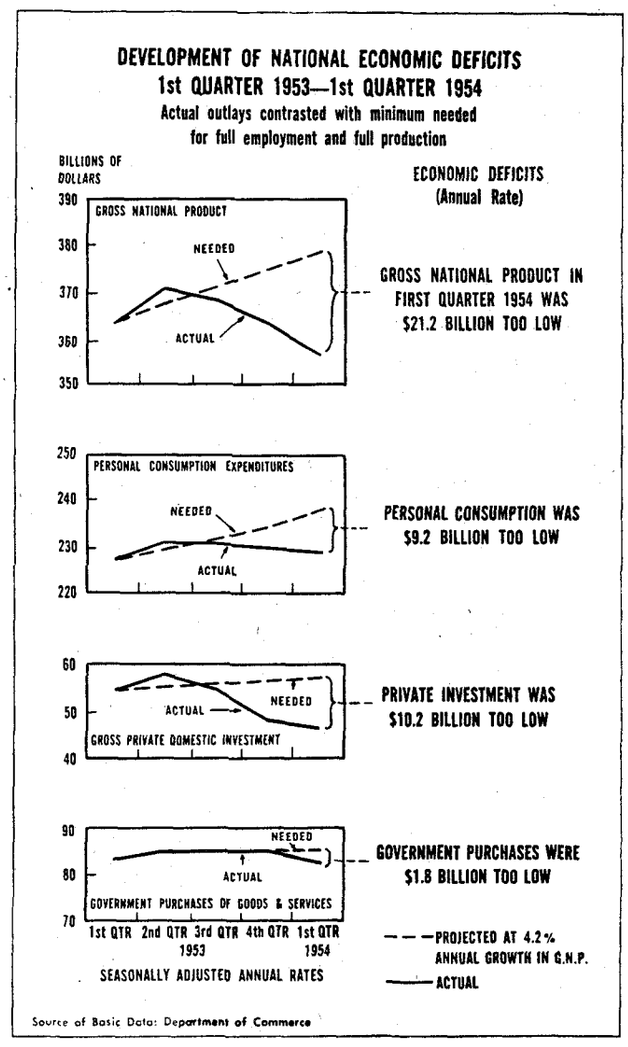
6. A higher minimum wage law is needed.

7. A comprehensive long-range housing program is needed.

8. A liberalized international trade policy should be put into effect, and some types of foreign aid enlarged, especially in underdeveloped areas.

Most of these recommendations are amplified in the second part of this study which will appear next week. These initial actions by government would stimulate employment, production and consumption directly; affect powerfully the psychology of business investors; and, by enlarging confidence, induce consumers to spend a somewhat larger part of their incomes.





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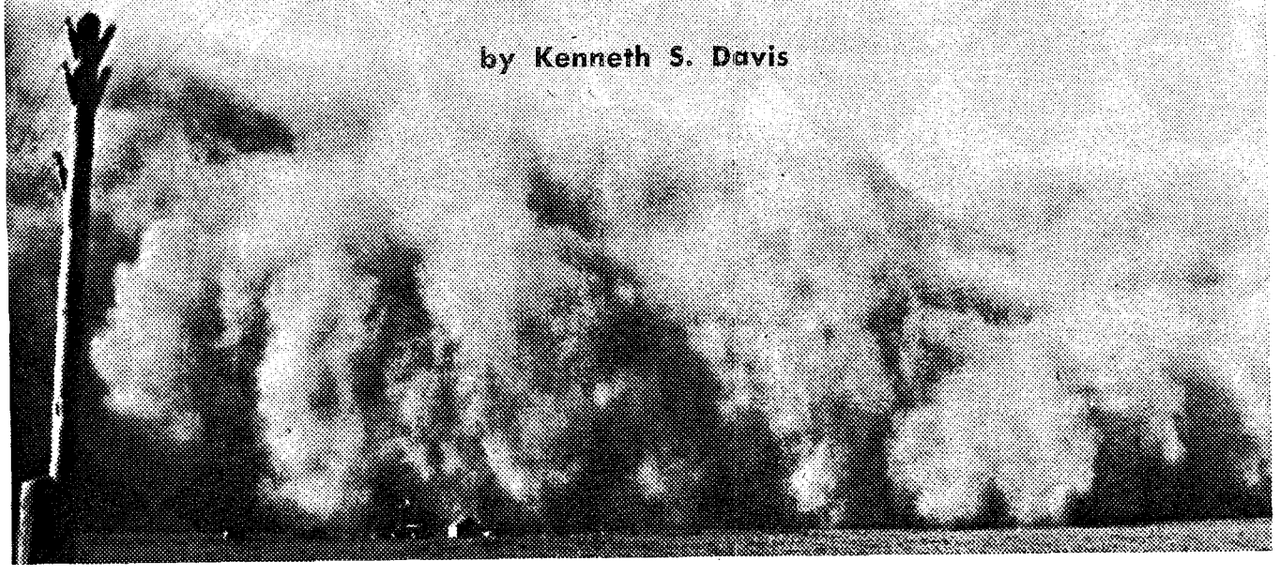
The Dust Is Blowing in Kansas

by Kenneth S. Davis



LAST WEEK Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Ross Rizley and the Department's special consultant on drought conditions, Harvey Dahl, met with agricultural authorities of Missouri and Kansas to discuss what immediate steps the federal government should take to succor this segment of a vast drought- and heat-stricken area. They met in Kansas City where it was relatively cool that day, only 95 or so, but where the generally prevailing temperatures this summer have boosted the sale of room air conditioners to well over twice the total number sold in all the summer of '53 and more than three times the total for the summer of '52—when the present sequence of drought years began.

Simultaneously, in Washington, the Senate Finance Committee voted unanimously to allow farmers and ranchers in designated drought-disaster areas to sell their cattle without payment of taxes, provided the cattle are replaced within the year. Almost simultaneously, throughout Kansas and most of the Southwest, the weather man was making his familiar prediction of fair and hot, with temperatures well above 100 and no rain in prospect.

Thus continued in the nation's press the Great Plains "drought story" which now approaches, in length, intensity and extent of geographic reference, the anguished tales of 1934 and '36, years no Midwesterner who lived through them can recall without a sense of dread. Last April, federal and state soil conservation experts, headed by E. A. Norton of the US Soil Conservation Service, announced results of a survey of 80 million acres in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, New Mexico, Colorado and Nebraska, reporting what was then already billed as the "worst drought in US history" had severely damaged 16 million acres and that if the ruined fields and pastures in the six-state area were contiguous they'd make a strip of desolation 50 miles wide and 200 miles long. To two areas—one in west Texas and New Mexico, the other in southeastern Colorado and southwestern Kansas—the unhappy title "dust bowl" was officially restored.

Here last summer, when I visited the area, miles of fence had already been buried under drifted dust and thousands of formerly cropped acres had been transformed, at least temporarily, into dune-heaped deserts. More fences (and they cost $300 a mile to build) were buried, more deserts created, by this Spring's heavy blowing. Here such farmers as Fred Dikeman, who operates 2,000 acres near Syracuse, Kansas, day after day suffered the peculiar suffocating horror of gritty blizzards (the light becomes a weird yellow-silver and may die into the blackest night-in-day; one has a sense of being buried alive in a dust heap)—blizzards in which the very means of livelihood were destroyed—and this despite the fact that they, like Dikeman, might themselves be following sound wind-erosion-control practices. Such men speak bitterly of careless, often absentee owners of neighboring land which, uncontrolled, initiates spreading deserts, undoing all that conservation-farmers have done to hold down the soil.

Here, too, thousands of housewives shared the experience of Mrs. Wayne Campbell of Garden City, Kansas, whose house in March was so permeated by dust that, at every footstep, clouds of it spurted upwards from carpets and, at every touch, further clouds spurted out of upholstering or curtains or pillows. Mrs. Camp-

Kenneth S. Davis of Kansas is the author of a recent book, River on the Rampage, *and numerous articles on land and water policy.*

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bell told a United Press reporter that she'd sweep no more "until I can see the sun." She'd not then seen it for days through the dreary veil of dust which sifted through every chink and crack, gritted between her teeth, and was sucked with every breath into her lungs.

Since then, despite a few general rains, the drought has intensified and spread, until it now pours searing heat on stubble-fields from which, a few weeks ago, farmers harvested one of their better wheat crops. Moreover, the official long-range forecast is for more of the same, while some unofficial "experts," such as Dr. Irving P. Krick of Denver, predict three more years of drought. If this prediction comes true, we may see next Spring a repetition of those gigantic dust storms of the mid-1930's which darkened the sky over the Eastern half of the United States and deposited Kansas silt on the decks of ships halfway to Spain. There will in that case be an increased demand for a national program through which such disasters can be, if not prevented, at least mitigated. There may even be, at last, an effective popular recognition of the fact that "dust bowls" and such droughts as '54's are but facets of a much larger, more enduring problem.

THE PROBLEM, experts agree, is not merely one of land use and erosion control. The dust-storms of the '50's and '30's, the vast wastage of virtually irreplaceable topsoil through water erosion, the ruinous pollution of lakes and streams by erosion silt, the terrifying water shortages in great urban areas almost every year (no New Yorker is likely to forget his city's drought a few years back) the tremendous floods which strike somewhere in our country every few months—all of these have a common denominator: water. They are, indeed, but aspects of a total problem of water and soil economy which becomes increasingly serious as both population and per-capita consumption of water swiftly increase and as our soil resources, despite effective though as yet insufficiently widespread soil-saving measures, continue to be eaten away by erosion. Clearly more social planning is needed not only for the use but for the further development of water resources, as well as for more rapid spread of soil conservation.

Moreover, the planning must be of a kind which typically American minds—and particularly such "business" brains as now dominate the Administration—seem almost instinctively to resist. Start with any seemingly separate water-and-soil problem and you'll soon find it merging with other problems whose solution, as you proceed, require wider and wider areas of community endeavor.

Start, for instance, with the wind erosion problem in western Kansas. There are various land-use and tillage practices which individual farmers can apply and which, even in extreme drought years, can greatly reduce soil blowing. Among these are strip-cropping against prevailing winds, deep "chisel" plowing which maintains a cloddy ground surface, permanent vegetative cover on the most erosible soil, and tree-and-shrub windbreaks. If these are to be effective, however, they must be applied by virtually *all* farmers, for a single untreated field gives rise to drifting soil which kills out vegetative cover and fills in roughened areas in adjacent fields; these in turn blow, so that in a remarkably short time during high wind periods the whole landscape may be going up in "smoke." Thus the problem, even when narrowly defined in the negative terms of reduced soil blowing, becomes a community one.

IN RECOGNITION of this, we Kansans (than whom few Americans are more "ruggedly" individualistic) adopted a "socialistic" law, back in the '30's, whereby county commissioners have authority to move onto untreated fields, have the needed work done, and assess the cost to future tax bills on the land involved. (The law, of course, is actually applied only in extreme cases, and not always then.) Also Kansas, like all other states, has adopted a soil conservation district law whereby farmers organize, generally on a county-wide basis, districts that are legal subdivisions of the state government. Through them, the federal SCS works with individual farmers; latent in them is the possibility of land-use regulations which, if adopted by a heavy majority vote, may have the force of law.

But when one turns from negative to positive approaches to the problem, a much larger community than the county, or even a federation of county-districts, is required. The positive approach involves watering now-dry lands. This means that, so far as physical techniques are concerned, we must think in terms of whole river basins, and this in turn means that national governmental action is required, since river basins are no respecters of state lines and the initial costs of irrigation works are very great. The national government's agency for dealing with this is the Reclamation Bureau of the Department of the Interior; through it hundreds of millions of tax dollars have been spent on big reservoirs, pumping stations and canals, these costs to be recovered in part by the sale of water to farmers who need it. In drought periods, the reservoirs may supply water to farmers who do not normally irrigate. Right now, for example, Reclamation is selling surplus water from five upstream reservoirs in the Kansas River basin to farmers in the tri-state corner of Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska. Farmers divert the water onto their land, or pump it from streams, paying $3.50 an acre-foot of it.

The sale of water, however, is not the only means by which Reclamation seeks to recover the cost of reservoirs; the Bureau also sells electricity and has installed scores of power stations and strung thousands of miles of power lines for this purpose in the power-starved Missouri Valley. Here, then, our problem widens to include the highly controversial national issue of private vs. public power. One result, in the past, has been the exacerbation of a long-standing conflict between Reclamation and

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the Army Engineers, to whom Congress has assigned responsibility for flood control and navigation developments on our rivers. The Engineers have not pressed aggressively for power development as a major function of their huge dams. Hence private power interests have been inclined to back the Engineers against Reclamation whenever the two giant bureaus quarreled over water-use or bucked one another in their quests for appropriations —for the appropriations are often so large that one agency's gain is the other's loss. Of course Reclamation, too, has powerful pressure groups behind its projects, and the war of lobbies has been quite often fought with a ruthless disregard for the general welfare.

The fact that each agency must compete with the others for appropriations did nothing to encourage needed co-operation. Measuring this bureaucratic chaos against the example provided by TVA, Sen. James E. Murray, Democrat from Montana, was led to introduce a Missouri Valley Authority bill in 1944.

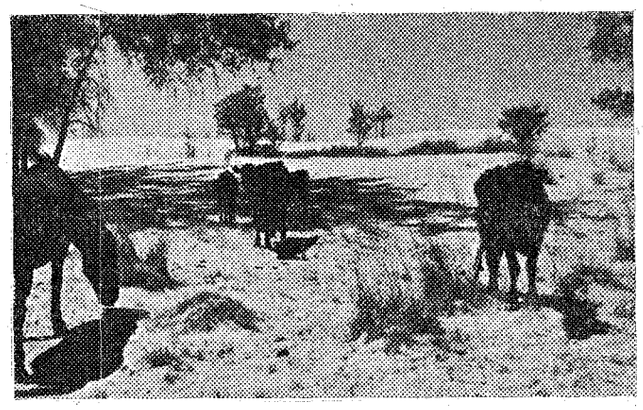
What happened then was perfectly predictable, if a bit nauseating to political idealists. Within weeks (threatened, they felt, by a "common enemy"), Reclamation and the Engineers had met in Omaha and consummated a "shot-gun wedding." An Inter-Agency Committee was set up to create the illusion of a central administrative agency through which planning and action would be done on a valley-wide basis (actually the committee has no planning or administrative authority whatever). This "Pick-Sloan" arrangement was subsequently confirmed, so far as need be, by Congressional legislation.

Proponents of the MVA proposal, on the other hand, found it difficult to carry their case to the people through an almost solidly hostile press, and that proposal has now languished to the point of death.

BUT THOUGH the MVA proposal may be dead, the basic organismic problem which prompted it remains stubbornly alive, and there is a growing popular recognition of its nature in the area where I live. My hometown of Manhattan, Kansas, was the gathering point for the great Kansas River flood of '51, the costliest flood in US history, and the irony of our worrying about drought while we still suffer the effects of the flood, and of our arguing over flood control while we pray for rain, is not lost among us. Obvious to the dullest among us is the need for some kind of "ever-normal granary" for water, whereby the excess in wet years may be stored in such a way as to reduce floods and be available for use in dry years.

But what should the device be? Should it be giant reservoirs of the kind called for by Army Engineers? Or should it be increased use of the soil itself as a reservoir, supplemented by small upstream dams, as called for by the Soil Conservation Service. It is in this "either/or" fashion that the question has been presented.

There are, however, increasing numbers of us who realize that the ultimate technical answer must be in



Drought on the range

terms, not of "either/or," but of "both/and," making use of whatever combination of structures and practices is needed to do a comprehensive, mutually reinforcing, basin-wide job. We "laymen" realize that we're not technically competent to decide whether or not one particular dam is a necessary part of a total regional scheme, but we also see that, as things now stand, no one else is competent either since no such comprehensive scheme now exists. Neither does the means of shaping one. When a government bureau technician speaks these days on flood control, we know only too well that what he says must accord with bureau "policy" (itself a reflection of bureau interests), whether or not it is wholly true.

Our best hope of an over-all administrative agency in the foreseeable future appears, at this moment, to be embodied in a bill introduced by Sen. Thomas C. Hennings Jr., Democrat from Missouri. Based on the findings of the Missouri Basin Survey Commission established by President Truman in '52, the Hennings bill seeks to establish a Missouri basin commission and compact board which would be responsible for the comprehensive development of land and water resources.

"As a federally created body," Hennings explained, "the new commission would have authority for the direction, co-ordination and control of over-all activities of the federal government within the Missouri basin relating to resource development. . . . In addition, by the proposed interstate compact, the states would formally participate in the program, sharing in the planning, reviewing proposals and approving or disapproving *the formal programs and the budgets which the commission would present to the Congress in behalf of the federal resource agencies, the states and the basin as an entity.*"

I've italicized the last statement because it indicates that the new agency might indeed have authority somewhat commensurate with the needs of its assignment. That the Hennings bill may have at least a chance of passage, even through a Republican Congress, seems indicated by the fact that the powerful, conservative *Kansas City Star*, which fought the MVA proposal tooth and nail, has tentatively endorsed it.

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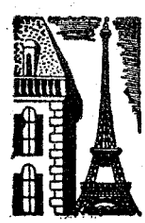
Paris Dispatch THE PREMIER GOES TO WORK

Modernization of French agriculture is one of the basic elements in the New Deal on which Premier Pierre Mendès-France is once again risking his political life. It is the fifth of 13 main planks in the platform of economic reform worked out by him and by his closest cabinet associate, Finance Minster Edgar Faure. Both men are still in their forties and hence by French traditionalist political standards hardly more than children. The actual preparation of the program presented to the National Assembly was done moreover by a nine-man Brain Trust made up for the most part of mere babies—men under 30. They were chosen as the most brilliant and dynamic who could be found in—and outside—the civil services for the task of breaking a stagnant and sterile economic pattern established in many respects well before the time of their grandfathers.

Nowhere is this backwardness more obvious and wasteful than on French farms. And in no part of the New Deal program more than in the plans for modernization of agriculture will Mendès-France need to have the support of what he calls the "irresistible force" of public opinion to conquer powerful lobbies.

The plans provide, for example, for a sharp reduction in the acreage devoted to grapes and beets. Today surpluses of wine are distilled into alcohol, the government buying the alcohol at high fixed prices and selling it at low, also fixed prices, usually taking losses up to 80 percent.



The result has been that more grapes have ended up as alcohol than as wine. And an even larger proportion of the beet crop has gone not into sugar but into alcohol. The subsidy has cost French taxpayers over the years far more than the cost of the war in Indo-China. And the alcohol lobby has become one of the most important in the country. The nature of the Premier's problem can be judged by the fact that most of the lobby's representatives in parliament come from his own party, the Radical Socialists, who despite their name are politically well to the Right of Center.

The Mendès-France New Deal cuts across the old distinctions between Right and Left. It calls for a kind of planned free enterprise, and less for full employment than for better and more productive employment. High production is the keynote; and to achieve it, the Premier is trying to make what most of his opponents and even many of his friends consider to be an impossible fusion of guiding ideas. These come from three, utterly different French statesmen who, he says, have influenced him most.

From Leon Blum under whom he served as Under-Secretary of Finance in the 1938 Popular Front Government, he gets his insistence on modernized economic reform and social progress. From Charles de Gaulle with whom he worked during and after the war, he learned the need for strong executive power in order to resist pressure groups. And from Raymond Poincare, the arch-orthodox conservative of finance, he accepts the basic principles of balanced budgets and rigorous financial stability.

Although Radical Socialists are in his cabinet, helping him get the "special powers" he needs to act by executive decrees rather than laws during the next two months, they and the Independents of the Right will fight him on the reduced farm subsidies. Gaullists also are in his cabinet, but many will balk at higher taxes on business profits and other elements of the reforms that affect industry. General de Gaulle himself has shown himself to be a bitter opponent of his former colleague who has committed the unpardonable sin of starting on the road to political success: people are talking about "Mendesism" and this is the first time since the coining of the word Gaullism that public opinion has paid such a personal tribute to a French politician.

The Socialists stand with Mendès-France against traditionalism in economics, against protectionism and cartelism. They also favor the emphasis on production, and heavy government investment in basic industries such as metallurgy, power and transportation, as well as in housing and the modernization of agriculture. But they are suspicious of concessions to private industry; and will fight to prevent cuts in the social security program—social and health insurance, workers' compensation, old age pensions and, above all, family allowances.

In the opinion of Mendès-France, cutting the waste out of French economy is as important as cutting the losses in Indo-China. High production at home is the natural link between peace in Asia and effective preparedness against aggression in Europe—either through EDC or through some substitute acceptable both to the French people and to the other members of the Atlantic Alliance. The Premier recognizes better than most Frenchmen moreover that the drain of the war in Asia does not of itself explain why French production has since 1929 gone up much less than 20 percent while it has risen nearly 150 percent in the US; and, since the currency reform of 1948, by leaps and bounds in West Germany.

From the domestic political point of view, one of the Premier's major objectives is to win workers back from the Communists. The principle of financial stability will therefore be kept—so far as possible—from the point of penalizing the workers. It won't be easy to do. It remains to be seen whether even the guiding ideas will be acceptable. These converge in a wage policy geared to—and conditioned on—greater productivity, a variety of French Stakhanovism. Wages will be increased, but partially, in sectors of industries and parts of the economy, rather than across the board everywhere.

Mendès-France will have to steer between the Scylla of the alcohol lobby and the Charybdis of the labor unions, and even, at that, through the turbulent (and often dirty) waters of French politics—by comparison Capitol Hill is pure and placid. But if he gets the New Deal through the National Assembly he will have made a port from which he won't be easily or soon dislodged.

Paris FRANK GORRELL

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BOOKS & COMMENT

The Contours of a Literature

by Irving Howe and Eliezer Greenberg

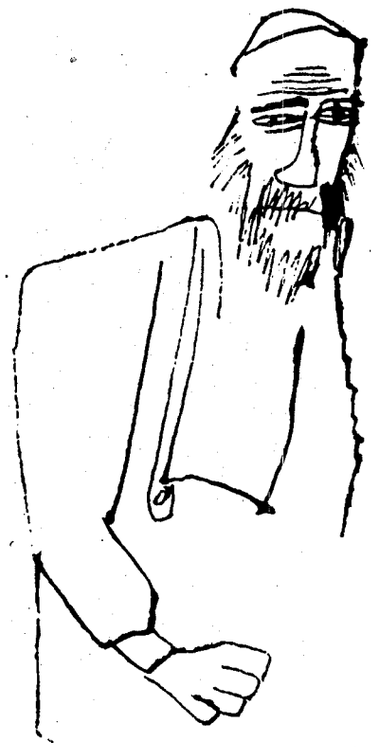
III

IN AMERICA, at the present moment, most uses of the term "traditional" tend to suggest political and moral conservatism, a wish to return to some earlier and presumably better state of things. In the Yiddish context, however, tradition is almost always bound up with moral and social rebelliousness, for the mere existence of Yiddish literature was itself a rebellion against the assumptions of Jewish orthodoxy. Had the Yiddish writer remained entirely rooted in the religious community, he would never have turned to imaginative composition at all, he would have been content with Hebrew as the language of religious observance. Once he began to write in Yiddish, he implicitly acknowledged that his main desire was to communicate with men as well as God.

The mere act of using the untamed secular "jargon" meant a worldly temptation, and it hardly mattered that some of the Yiddish writers were personally devout. Inevitably, a good many of the early Yiddish writers came from the *Yeshivas* where they had been subjected to the long exhausting grind of rabbinical study and now, in reaction, turned not to the gentile world but to the painful effort to understand their own ghetto world in purely human terms.

The spokesman for orthodoxy warned that once Jewish youth began to write stories and verses in Yiddish they would feel a desire to emulate the themes and forms of the West—they were right enough in a way, only they failed to understand that the choice had already been made. Slowly, gradually the Yiddish writers began to disengage themselves from their social-religious community, to acquire a sense of group identity, to read the works of Western writers and find there models of craft and skill they could find nowhere else. The sudden growth of a formal Yiddish literature in the late nineteenth century was a symptom that the Enlightenment had finally established itself in the world of the east European Jews.

This rebelliousness of the Yiddish writers was quickened by more immediate, ideological stimulants. Both Zionism and Socialism offered visions of the good life or at least a better life; both made it seem legitimate to compare the condition of the Jews with the condition of other peoples, a comparison that radically undercut the earlier assumptions of Jewish life; and both brought with them the Western traits of restlessness, self-scrutiny, impatience. Once the Yiddish writer had liberated himself from the hold of religious orthodoxy, once he realized that he was floating somewhere between the *shtetl* (or Jewish town) and the outer world, though still much closer, perforce, to the former, he could no longer blink the appalling misery and degradation of life in *this* world by keeping his head in the clouds of the Messianic expectation. He still loved his folk and perhaps, in his growing loneliness, he loved it more than ever; but in his judgment of its condition he could not help applying, almost unwittingly, the standards of the West. That is why the introduction of naturalism into Yiddish literature comes as an elemental revolution, a harsh and violent gesture repudiating the tradition of *edelkeit* (refinement, delicacy) from which had stemmed the writings of Mendele, Sholem Aleichem and to a lesser extent, I. L. Peretz.



BEN SHAHN

YET the possibilities for revolt were severely limited. The Yiddish writer could not cut himself off from the people: there was no place else to go. He could not find shelter in a Bohemia or solace himself with dreams of "the happy few." His world lacked the range and security to permit him to live apart from or "above" the folk. Rebellion or acquiescence—these were real options; but not escape. One can not imagine in Yiddish literary life of three or four decades ago a figure like Stefan George, proclaiming an aristocracy of the word, or even like T. S. Eliot, launching a desperate raid upon an alien tradition.

Here and there a Yiddish writer may have tried to adopt an aristocratic or esthete pose, but the only result was that he made himself seem pitiable. The Yiddish writer had to remain in intimate relation with the folk, even if it turned its back upon him; he had to engage it in a dialogue even if the only answer he would soon receive was his echo. But during the "classical" period of Yiddish literature and for some time afterward there grew up a remarkably close tie between author and audience; and the literature that came out of that moment was a literature of affection and intimacy, affection even in complaint and intimacy even in despair. The briefest notice of the tie between Yiddish writers and their audience should include a word about the Yiddish theatre as a force bringing the two more closely together. Beginning with the wandering troupes of eastern Eu-

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rope, and particularly Rumania, the Yiddish theatre quickly became a popular institution, in fact, the major cultural outlet for the Jewish masses. Not only did professional playwrights like Abraham Goldfaden and Jacob Gordin write for it, but many Yiddish poets and novelists were tempted by the mass audiences it could provide in such centers as Warsaw and New York. To be sure, the Yiddish theatre was often sentimental, crude and melodramatic, but at its occasional best it released an enormous creative and emotional energy. And so long as it flourished, the slow insidious process of alienation between writer and audience which had already begun in the career of Peretz, could never quite reach its painful finish.

ONE final problem in reading or translating Yiddish literature needs to be mentioned here, the vexing problem of sentimentality.

Sentimentality is defined by Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren as an effort to evoke an "emotional response in excess of the occasion." John Crowe Ransom, in a somewhat different approach, relates sentimentality to "certain inferior performances" in art:

> The artist has the right sentiment for the object, but articulates the object no better than a man who has merely the sentiment. Unable to communicate the precise object, he would communicate at least his feeling for it, or his election of it as an object, and he is right in assuming that feelings are contagious among spontaneous persons. So he points reverently to it, and indicates the state of his own affections, and leaves us to explore the object mostly for ourselves.

Both statements are helpful, and the difference between them is probably due to their being focussed on slightly different problems. The Brooks and Warren definition seems to emphasize the idea that an author *exploits*, with some degree of deliberateness, those emotions in his audience he knows to be all too readily available. The Ransom definition stresses sentimentality as the familiar outcome of an honest or respectable failure.

Both views are pertinent to a discussion of Yiddish literature, but not equally pertinent. The Brooks and Warren approach recommends itself particularly for an age of mass culture in which the responses of an audience are played upon with scientific malice; the Ransom approach points to the high cost of artistic effort at any time.

As it happens, however, the sentimentality that exploits the emotions of a vulnerable audience is relatively infrequent in Yiddish literature (it can be found to a far greater extent in the Yiddish theatre), if only because the blight of mass culture, which is the blight of an industrialized society, did not attack the Yiddish world until rather late and then with little of the virulence it spent upon American or English literature. Yiddish writing, to be sure, had its servant girl novels and still has its tear-jerking newspaper serials; but it is relatively easy to segregate such trash from serious work in a way that becomes increasingly harder to do in American literature. Far more prevalent in Yiddish literature is the kind of sentimentality described by Ransom, the kind that results from indicating an object with "reverent pointing" instead of embodying it imaginatively.

Differently my song would ring
If for gentiles I would sing,
Not in Yiddish, in "Jargon,"
That has no proper sound or tone.
It has no words for sex-appeal
And for such things as lovers feel.
Yiddish has but quips and flashes
Words that fall on us like lashes,
Words that stab like poisoned spears,
And laughter that is full of fears,
And there is a touch of gall,
Of bitterness about it all.

I. L. PERETZ

Now a reader who has been raised exclusively upon "modern" twentieth century literature may well find a large quotient of sentimentality in Yiddish literature. Such a reader, however, is not likely to do more than declare his gesture of dismissal, secure in the knowledge that once a piece of writing has been called sentimental nothing more need be said.

But no easy gesture, whether of acceptance or rejection, will quite do. There *is* a considerable streak of sentimentality in Yiddish culture—it is a major deficiency. More important, however, is that area of Yiddish writing which may seem sentimental to readers who approach it with alien expectations but which is not at all sentimental when seen in the context of the Yiddish tradition itself.

For how can we tell when a piece of writing is sentimental and when it is not? Any definition assumes a set of common emotional and perhaps philosophical attitudes at the base of a given culture. Suppose, however, what is indeed the case: that the attitudes governing one culture are very different from those of another. Suppose that what seems, for one culture, an emotion in excess of the occasion is not at all so for another culture. Suppose what may seem, for one culture, a sufficient evocation or a delicate embodiment will be merely a "reverent pointing" for another. And suppose that in Yiddish culture there is a greater emotional permissibility, a greater readiness to welcome tears or laughter or both together than in American culture. The desperate reliance upon blandness and composure, the cult of understatement, the assumption that it is good to feel but bad to show one's feelings—these attitudes, familiar enough to us, are quite alien to the Yiddish ethos. Perhaps this means that Yiddish is more primitive. Perhaps it means that the Yiddish is healthier.

We must remember that the vocabulary of literary criticism rests largely upon such unexplored assumptions of value, that such notions as "sentimentality" are not eternal constants but are radically shaped by the context of the culture in which they are used. Cultures which have learned to enjoy the taste of worldly dominance and success, which have been able to acquire a sheen of assurance and elegance, will naturally tend to favor different criteria for establishing the margin of permissible emotionality than those which live in the aura of suffering and martyrdom, concerned not with the style of this world but the promise of the next.

A mature literary taste will be open to both varieties of expression; will welcome the possibility of responding to new standards of feeling; will be more than cautious in assuming that a judgment of preference is necessary or easily to be made.

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This is the third of three essays on Yiddish Literature, drawn from a longer study which will appear in A Treasury of Yiddish Stories, *to be published by the Viking Press in October.*

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The Melting Pot

"THESE AMERICANS associate as freely as they breathe," exclaimed a German observer in 1840, and therewith she put her finger on what was perhaps the most crucial difference between the old world and the new.

In Europe a man belonged, by and large, to whatever groups he was born into—a village community, a church, a social class. There was nothing he could do to change the nature of these groups and as long as he stayed in the old country there was relatively little chance to escape them. Not that most people wanted to change their groups. In Europe, as everywhere else in the world, a man knows *who he is,* he defines his own identity, by his relationships to other men. If freedom meant freedom from all group ties, no one would want it; the freedom America offered was the freedom to make new groups—a process which could be excruciatingly painful, and besides, a group you make or choose can never be satisfying in quite the same way as a group you are born into. Men came to America for various reasons, but hardly ever with the deliberate wish to break all their old connections—that was a by-product, and the new freedom was something thrust upon most immigrants rather than consciously sought.

The American People in the Twentieth Century, by Oscar Handlin (Harvard; $3.75).

For example, a Polish peasant, torn from his native village by forces beyond his understanding and set down in a New York slum had lost his neighbors, his church, the kind of land and the kind of work he knew. How could he rebuild associations that would make life mean something—to himself and to others? Since he could communicate most freely with those who spoke the same language, he grouped himself with other Poles, and for the first time began to think of himself as "a Pole," instead of as a native of his village. Thus a certain kind of nationalism was actually created in America and eventually had considerable importance for our foreign policy.

Having been designed to meet the needs of the moment, American groups never became either as automatic or as eternal as European groups. What suited immigrant parents did not suit the children—and even after immigration slowed down, the great movements inside America, from country to town, from the dust bowl to California, kept Americans busy working out new identifications and new forms of free group attachment.

Of course there are exceptions, the big one being the Negro group. For a colored person in America the problem of identification is *not* one he works out for himself, it is one forced upon him, defined for him, unamenable to his own choice. An example of a smaller but even less free group was that of Japanese-Americans on the West Coast who were interned during the war. Such groups have been outside the general American experience.

The historian who has contributed most toward understanding of our immigrant background, who believes that immigrants *are* American history, is Oscar Handlin. In 1951 he won the Pulitzer Prize for *The Uprooted,* a detailed and deeply moving study of what the experience of immigration meant to the millions of nineteenth century Europeans who came to our shores. Since he drew his material largely from their own letters in the dozen languages which he commands, the book has a rare quality of immediacy.

Mr. Handlin's new book, *The American People,* is strikingly different. Just as its very title lacks the emotional overtones of *The Uprooted,* so *The American People* is a cool and rather generalized study of the great groups that have jostled and migrated around America in the last fifty years. On the whole Mr. Handlin's judgment of what has happened in this half century is encouraging. In the days when it seemed as if all American history had sprouted in a single stream from Plymouth Rock, Americanizers assumed that eventually all new citizens would be made over in the image of a Puritan opportunist. At that time the "hyphenates," the German-Americans and the Italo-Americans had no Oscar Handlin to tell them that they were as American as anybody, that just by living here they were creating American life. As the nation grew, many, many millions more Americans could look back to an ancestor who had been marked by the agonies of a steerage passage than by the rigors of Massachusetts Bay. We all need to understand both experiences.

But today, as a result of maturity, and prosperity, and internal mobility, and the ideals of democracy working on all of us, Americans are growing more comfortable in their own skins, less sure there is a single American type, less eager to "pass" if they are Negroes, less eager to change their names if they are Jews. An American with an Italian background can be happier today both about his Americanism

Three Poems

Send Me Down

In the tombs the Agrarians come and go
Talking of Edgar Allan Poe.

Clean Limerick

There was a French writer named Sartre
Who got off to a pretty good startre.
But as year followed year
It got painfully clear
He was longer on wind than on artre.

Fearful Asymmetry

Geiger counter, clicking soon
In the forests of our noon,
What immortal eye will glimpse
These corpses, and our impotence?

WELDON KEES

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and his Italianness. The movies and the press have become sensitive to the cruelties of discrimination, and even our demagogues who fifty years ago thrived on racial hatred now display the Jew and the Irishman on their staffs to prove their "tolerance."

As national origins become of less importance, Mr. Handlin sees us as settling down in three great patterns of living, as Catholics, Protestants and Jews. For some reason these are divergences which Americans are able to accept, though the "religion" that Mr. Handlin sees is not a matter of dogma, but rather of social class and way of life. Even though many people stay within the fold where they were reared, no one has to. We can still "associate as freely as we breathe," and in the history of the world this is still an astonishingly new phenomenon.

The American People is a useful and comprehensive volume, but to read it provides by no means the exercise for one's historical imagination that *The Uprooted* did. One who wants to find a new flavor in American history should turn back to that book.

PRISCILLA ROBERTSON

A Double-edged Sword

W. K. WIMSATT, JR., entered the main arena of literary controversy some years ago with *The Intentional Fallacy.* With *The Affective Fallacy,* he established himself there permanently: which is to say that his "colleagues"—other critics with blood in their eyes—answered him. Together with one other,

The Verbal Icon, by W. K. Wimsatt, Jr. (Kentucky; $4).

these two essays make up the opening section of his new collection, *The Verbal Icon.*

All three are attacks. The first hits those critics who must believe they have ferreted out an author's *intention* before they will dare try to judge his work: a poem, says Wimsatt, *is;* if there is in the poem something said or implied which the author did not intend, and so did not control, the poem suffers by it; there is criticism of poetry—and there is author psychology, which ends in biography and relativism. (Obviously, he already has a good many enemies.) The second goes after those critics who substitute the reader's *reaction* to a work for a judgment of the work: what a poem *is,* says Wimsatt, is not what it *does;* describing a poem's emotional effect does not explain how or why the effect was achieved; to begin by seeking a standard of criticism in audience psychology is to end in impressionism and relativism. (More enemies.) The result of either of these psychological approaches to literature "is that the poem itself . . . tends to disappear."

The Chicago Critics (R. S. Crane, Richard McKeon, Elder Olson and others) agreed. And they believed they had found the source of both "fallacies": a Romantic distaste for technical criticism. So they exhumed and embraced a neo-Aristotelian criticism based on genres and rules. And in 1952, with the weighty *Critics and Criticism Ancient and Modern,* they attempted to annihilate just about every other existing critic and "school."

But Wimsatt has a word for them, too. The third attack in his opening section is "The Chicago Critics: the fallacy of the Neo-classic species." Certainly, he says, the psychological fallacies are a reaction against technical criticism in a rigidly formalist sense; but a return to the neo-classic fallacy is hardly a solution. He then proceeds to demonstrate that the Chicago Critics are driven, not into one or the other, but into both the intentional and the affective fallacies by the limitations of their methods. And, he says, they are arrogant and "shifty" to boot. (Enemies beyond counting.)

So Wimsatt has taken on a fairly extensive job of cutting-down-to-size, even in an area where the double-edged sword is a standard weapon for the gentleman. But he makes a good deal of sense. The poem itself—the work—surely is the critic's first concern, or should be. Yet it is devilishly hard to get at. Concentration on the purely *formal* aspects of the work is deadly to the critic, the reader, and the poem itself. If *message* is to be the critic's focal point, most poems would have to be rejected as needlessly pretentious ways of making a statement.

If *total meaning* is what the critic must look for, then he is squarely up against the problems first of understanding the poem himself, then of giving some fairly cogent explanation of at least part of what he understands and of how to get at the rest, and finally of evaluating that total meaning—not its formal presentation, not the degree to which presentation fits intention, not the emotion he experienced, but *it,* complete. And he must not let his moral preconvictions blind him to whatever fusion (if any) of moral values may be part of that meaning. He is squarely on the spot as a man. As a man also, he is interested in all the information historical scholarship and psychology can give him about the poem and the poet. So it is little wonder if often he seeks to substitute these interests for criticism, and even to claim that they are criticism.

Wimsatt's quarrel with the large proportion of critics who fall into one or another of this "fallacy" categories is not, then, just petty professional bickering. He is attacking methods which he believes lead away from criticism. And, although there is a humorous aspect to all this feuding, and a boring aspect, too, neither of which Wimsatt entirely avoids, there also is an element of dialogue with serious implications for a society steadily becoming more literate.

Today, most critics teach—play a part in shaping both the literary taste and production of new generations; or they edit "little" magazines—largely determine what and who we will be reading in the future. Examples of their influence abound; and on the evidence few would claim that they have solved many basic problems of their craft, or have fully met the responsibilities of their power.

In this context, Wimsatt offers a more responsible method of criticism. He begins by dismissing—as "expressionistic monism which in effect prohibits all critical talk"—the Romantic thesis that the beautiful is the successful expression of intuition, that matter and spirit, nature and art are one. He sets up an opposition between nature and art—not claiming that they exist separately from the poet, the poem or the audience—and suggests that the true complementary opposites in such a system are not "technique" and "genius" (intentional fallacy), not "technique" and "response" (affective fallacy), but "technique" and "content." This opposition is the axis of his critical approach —called "dramatic" or "objective"—a

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criticism moving from content to technique and back again, trying to see each in the light of the other, to explain and *assert* their interdependence. With "content" to be examined, there comes the need to judge. He does not dodge it:

> The function of the objective critic is by approximate descriptions of poems, or multiple restatement of their meaning, to aid other readers to come to an intuitive and full realization of poems themselves and hence to know good poems . . . from bad ones.

Good and Bad. In terms of what? The question has to follow. Yet, as Wimsatt points out, even those who would escape it by using the language of scientific neutralism or emotional affectism can seldom avoid evaluating, even if only in the tone of their discussion. Preferring a conscious basis for judgment, he devotes much space to seeking an answer which will not make poetry the slave of morality, or vice versa.

Poetry and moral dogma, he decides, are separate. But both have a common source in experience, and both are related to the "master ideas of evil as negation, or not-being, a gap in order, and of good as positive, or being." And it follows that, to use Peter Viereck's clearer statement of this view, "aesthetics and ethics partly overlap; and greatness is more often found inside this area than outside it."

For Wimsatt, then, "The critical problem is always how to push both understanding and value as far as possible in union, or how to make our understanding evaluative." The tool he chooses is *explication.* But since explication can lend itself to any system, Wimsatt insists it be used to discover *both* the degree of *correspondence* to external reality, and the degree of internal *coherence* to be found in the poem.

This is criticism in terms of value and of structure. It should be expressed, says Wimsatt, in "terms of form and order" for such terms keep to the poem and enable a critic to make "more and more relevant observations about any specific work." The argument, although not final or beyond challenge, is consistent and impressive.

In terms of form and order, however, Wimsatt's book is faulty. There are sixteen essays in this collection. Seven of these, and they occupy the very center of the book, have no direct relation to the main line of development. They combine to form a rock over which the reader has to climb in order to get back to the main path of Wimsatt's argument.

Of course, there is bound to be a connection between Wimsatt's analysis of literary techniques and his over-all theory of criticism. And he probably included these essays—all have been previously published—with some idea of illustrating his theory. But they are very badly placed. And they contain a substantial proportion of the kind of humorless bickering that makes the reader feels that he has opened the wrong door and stumbled into a family quarrel.

These sandwiched essays also contain the worst examples of "good writing" in a book which is on the whole too "well-written." This "impressive quality" seems characteristic of critical works now.

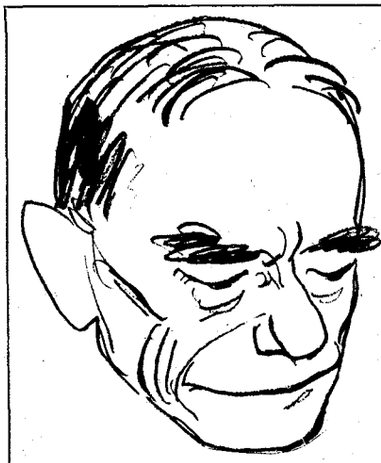
But surely these books are written to communicate ideas to the reader. And if the ideas are complicated, all the more reason to avoid an obscure professional jargon largely borrowed from philosophy and the sciences. It seems that a very difficult style, in which the devices of poetry are mixed with Latin and Greek, and English of the utmost abstraction, is the garment a critic's thought must wear today if he is to be taken seriously by his colleagues.

Wimsatt writes that a critic's job is to "teach." Whom? Other critics only? During the past several decades in this country, a remarkable number of unusually intelligent, sensitive, perceptive men have devoted themselves to literary criticism. They have done brilliant work with meaning for all of us. They probably are still doing it. But it's increasingly difficult to see where they are and understand what they're doing.

THOMAS FITZSIMMONS

Notes on the Critics

IRVING HOWE is on the English faculty of Brandeis University. He is the author of a critical study of William Faulkner's work. ELIEZER GREENBERG is a Yiddish poet and editor. WELDON KEES is a San Francisco poet—and a painter as well. PRISCILLA ROBERTSON is a historian, and the author of a book on *The Revolutions of 1848.*



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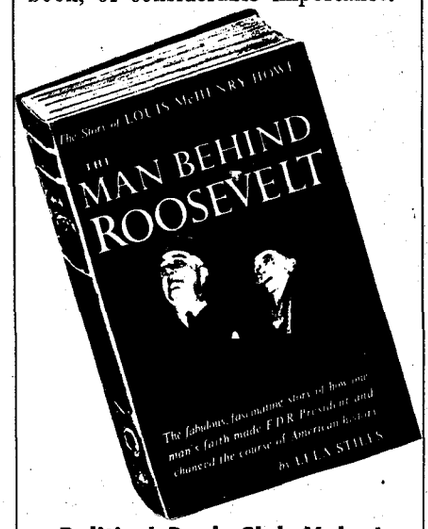

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THEATRE

HERE is a sentence I never thought I should live to write: I have just seen a play by T. S. Eliot in summer stock. Never, at any rate, until the last couple of years. By now it is the N. Y. *Daily News* that's convinced Mr. Eliot is a playwright, and only the highbrows of the *Times* and *Tribune* who aren't so sure. The paradox is one Eliot invited. He has stressed the point that dramatic poetry is unlike other poetry; he can hardly be surprised if some admire his dramas in proportion as they are unlike *all* poetry. This brings the wheel full circle, for Eliot's interest in the drama began with his complaint that, of late, it had become prosaic.

Among those who know all Eliot's writings, there is, I think general agreement that his plays are his least successful achievement. Just because of this, there is now a danger of dismissing them too lightly—as for instance with the formula that they are *simply* an attempt at commercial playwriting. Actually, the commercial theatre knows of no plays that resemble them in more than externals. Nor can the plays be neatly amputated from the body of Eliot's *oeuvre.*

To take a technical and trivial example: the quotations and obscurities. For a commercial playwright it would certainly be odd to slip a chunk of Conan Doyle or Shelley into the dialogue and not say so or to bury the plot of the *Alcestis* so deep that it has to be exhumed in *Comparative Literature,* Vol. 5, No. 2. I am far from offering these instances in Eliot's defense; on the contrary they bring out the J. Donald Adams in me: such carrying-on strikes me as beside all possible points. And, while I do not agree that *The Cocktail Party* is unclear in its main drift, there are certainly passages in it that convey just about nothing, either to me or to certain Eliot experts whom I've consulted. I can only suppose that those who say "Drama, not Poetry" were busy with their own dramatic and unpoetic thoughts while these passages were being spoken.

If Eliot failed, it wasn't because he took it easy. The real cause is the opposite: over-ambition. Eliot is trying to write a kind of play he cannot write, and I don't mean a drawing-room play: I mean a play in which the *Oresteia,* the *Alcestis,* or the *Ion* is re-created in a drama of modern life. And you'd almost think Eliot intended to do it simply by getting rid of poetry, for he has never created characters and only once a plot. (Even this plot—of *The Confidential Clerk*—considering its ingenuity and comic intention, remains surprisingly inert in performance.)

We should not complain of the lack of poetry if in his prose (printed as verse) Eliot had created characters. His only full-size character is Becket. Now any writer could fail in this field, but Eliot may be the only one who could succeed only in the face of his own philosophy of life: for he does not believe that relationships between human beings are possible. Perhaps the only playwright to agree with Eliot has been Pirandello. Yet Pirandello believed you at least had a relationship with an *image* of the other person; you at least had the *illusion* of a relationship; and he dramatized the illusion. In Eliot's plays there is really *nothing* between people, not even false relationships, not even illusions. The husband and wife in *The Confidential Clerk* sit side by side and it is not merely that they don't understand each other, it is as if they have never talked to each other before; they are not *like* strangers, they *are* strangers: they wouldn't know each other's favorite brand of cigarettes. And that is not all: for Eliot, human relationships are not even an ideal. "The soul," he quotes from St. John of the Cross, "cannot be possessed of the divine union until it has divested itself of the love of created beings." I am sure a Christian apologist would want to add that St. John is referring to a state of mind *beyond* earthly love, not just *without* it. But Mr. Eliot's religiousness has always seemed to me rather close to misanthropy, just as his politics is never far from snobbery and is at certain points anti-Semitic.

Well, the snobbery pays off in the plays to the extent that it suggests the drawing-room setting and Eliot's highly unusual attitude to it. This drawing room is part-historical (England as seen by the man from St. Louis), part-legendary (made up of images established in Eliot's mind by, say, Noel Coward, P. G. Wodehouse, or even Aubrey Smith and Nigel Bruce). But the philosophy of St. John of the Cross, as quoted, and, it would seem, taken rather literally, is about the most anti-dramatic view of life ever committed to paper: the aim of life is—to get rid of human relationships! "If they could exist in the first place"—adds Eliot, and assumes they couldn't.

Eliot's three "modern" plays (*Family Reunion, Cocktail,* and *Clerk*) are three attempts at one play. Each is, as it were, full of quotations from the others. Characters and situations recur—most notably, the agonized young person who goes off and becomes a priest or missionary (Harry, Celia, Colby). You can see what he's driving at, and I tend to think there's a kind of play Eliot *could* write: it could be made out of his favorite material (hollow men, waste lands, a sense of sin) but the vehicle for it would have to be, not anti-poetic, but super-poetic. *Murder in the Cathedral* is still his best contribution to the theatre.

It would be mean-spirited not to mention that, though the "modern" plays fail of their intention, they are full of incidental felicities—more in fact than have yet been revealed to any audience. For up to now, the major productions have been directed by an elocution teacher who has held the actors in check.

The production I saw this summer was *The Cocktail Party* at Bucks County Playhouse. Directed by the elocution teacher's stage manager, it followed the disastrously formalistic "blocking" of the Broadway show: the actor who speaks most takes center stage while the others gaze out to sea, etc. But Uta Hagen showed that the part of Celia *can* be played with genuine passion, and Edna Best showed that Eliot's dry smile—helped out by a fine comedienne—can become the laughter of a whole audience. In short, while the plays are second-rate Eliot, they are better than most plays, and it would be interesting to know just how good—if for the first time they were really acted and directed—they would be. I should like to make one recommendation: that the part of Reilly, in *Cocktail,* not be played by the star. The play is about Alcestis and Admetus, Lavinia and Edward, and we have not seen it till we have seen these parts presented as the "leads."

ERIC BENTLEY

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CORRESPONDENCE

► T.R.B. and Farm Parity

I have been a subscriber to the *New Republic* for nearly a quarter century and my first great disappointment with its opinions came when T.R.B. joined the anti-farm price support crusade in his "Washington Wire" of July 5, 19 and 26. The only effect that lower farm prices will have is the doom of the family type farm. If that type of farming is so inefficient and antiquated that it has outlived its usefulness, then T.R.B. and Ezra Benson are on the right track. Family-type farming cannot exist without government regulation and support and will be as extinct as a dodo bird without it.

What will take its place? Collective farms? Ridiculous! Co-op farms? Co-ops are not looked upon with favor by the Administration. That leaves the field to big business and industry which are regarded as 100 percent American, efficient and honest and encouraged by the Administration in every way by gifts and handouts and tax relief—and *subsidies,* the thing that is so evil when given to family-type farmers.

Big business farming could and I believe would control production, something that the small family farmers can't do, but it makes me shudder to contemplate what such control would do to our food supply and I don't believe the government would allow it. The alternative — government control and price support or subsidies. Would big business farming be more efficient in conserving the soil than the family-type farming? Big business and industry have a very poor record as conservers of a nation's resources.

CARL SANDBERG

Penwock, Minnesota

• • •

I am plainly irked at the frequent sniping at the farmer in T.R.B.'s column. The time is overdue that he as a liberal take more than a superficial look at the farm situation. All he sees is the "surplus" part of the program, which for some seems to obscure entirely the farmer himself.

Let us look at some of the facts:

(1) The lowering of supports on butter increased butter sales in the month of April only seven percent, which amounted to $2,290,000. But to the dairy farmer who took the price cut it meant a loss of $70,000,000 in that same month.

(2) Wheat dropped 60 cents a bushel in 1953 but bread rose in price. The value of the farmer's wheat in a one-pound loaf of bread in 1953 was 2½ cents. A loaf of bread here in the West costs the consumer 25 cents.

(3) Operating expenses, in 1928, took 51 cents out of every dollar; they now take 74 cents of every dollar. The cost per unit of all farm production, taking 1937-41 as 100, has more than doubled since then.

(4) Today there are only 2¼ acres of cultivated land per person, compared to 3¼ at the close of World War I. And this is constantly becoming smaller as population rises.

(5) Net farm income last year was 25 percent below the high of 1947. Farmers, who represent 15 percent of the population, receive only 8 percent of the total national income.

(6) Total farm mortgage debt rose last year to the highest level since mid-depression 1934. Farm mortgage debts increased 7 percent during 1953. There are a few rich farmers, but the majority of them are in the low income brackets. Prices paid farmers in the past two years dropped 16 percent, while consumer price index rose to 114.

As to subsidies, all farm subsidies have amounted to only a fraction of the subsidies received by business.

Those who live in terror of food surpluses, while millions go hungry, may be reminded there is a way of dealing with surpluses other than severely penalizing the farmer. Although the surplus bogey has been much overdone, it is amazing that those who worry about surpluses disregard so entirely the Brannan Plan for dealing with them. It is a simple plan and because of its simplicity it should be workable.

In a nut shell, it is this: The farmer would be subsidized by production payments on a basic unit of production, determined on the basis of what would afford a decent standard of living. Whatever is produced over and above this unit would be sold on the market for what ever the market price is. If there is anything to the thesis that low market prices are reflected in low consumer prices, the consumer would benefit. If there is not, then the Benson people would have the processors and distributors to deal with.

MARIE EATON

Hinsdale, Montana

T.R.B. comments:
The farmer is disadvantageously placed in the economy and has fallen behind through no fault of his own. He needs help. I don't think it will aid the farmer, however, to try to maintain the towering stockpiles of crops the government now owns; on the contrary (as Henry A. Wallace recently wrote in this magazine) continuation of this program may mean disaster for the farmer.

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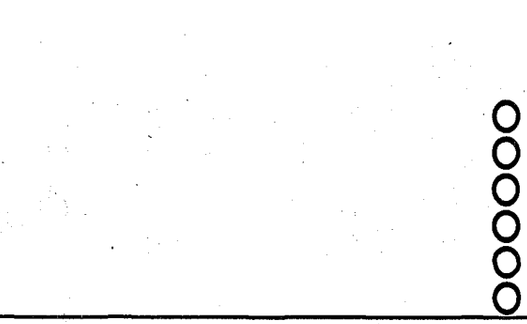

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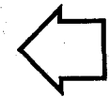

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